

RECYCLING AT ITS BEST

By: George Magnuson, City Councilmember

What do computer screens, microwaves, sinks, grass clippings, lumber, glass and tires have in common? Perhaps not much at first glance, but you can find all these materials at the Material Recovery Facility (MRF) or the “Murf.” in Placer County. This facility serves an important function in our community by recycling and keeping waste out of landfills. You may not have thought much about it, but garbage disposal can have a significant impact on resources and our community.

Recycling – we all know that we should do it. After all, we want to protect our environment don’t we? However, how many of you can say that you recycle all appropriate materials 100 percent of the time? Or, even 50 percent of the time? Additionally, how many residents do we have in Rocklin who have never attempted to recycle at all?

The truth is that despite good intentions and the many ways available for recycling, some people don’t take this effort seriously. It often seems difficult or not worth the effort to sort trash even if it will be picked up curb side in a special blue tote. Additionally, when people do participate in source separation recycling programs the rate of participation is often very low. Each bag of sorted, recyclable material may be fully recoverable but if only a small percentage of the population is sorting their trash then that may not be the most efficient way to do it.

So, how have Rocklin and the other jurisdictions in Placer County approached recycling to make it the most effective in reducing waste? At the regional MRF, Rocklin’s garbage is sorted by hand to recover recyclable materials such as steel, aluminum, plastics, glass, newspaper and magazines just to name a few. By working together with the Cities of Roseville and Lincoln, as well as Placer County, we are successfully conserving natural resources, reducing waste and keeping garbage disposal costs down for residents.

Rocklin, with the help of the Western Placer Waste Management Authority (WPWMA), has achieved the statewide goal of diverting 50 percent of our waste from landfill disposal. Simply put, even if you don’t recycle – we will do it for you. This is a system of recycling that has guaranteed participation from residents and produces tremendous results! Clearly, these results are far greater than if we were dependent on voluntary recycling alone.

The MRF manages and sorts almost 1,000 tons of garbage per day from both rural and city communities. Additionally, they have a Buyback Center where you can redeem your aluminum cans, glass bottles and plastic containers for cash. Proactive in protecting the environment, the MRF also has a household hazardous waste program that accepts free of charge items such as latex paint, used oil filters, fluorescent light bulbs and household batteries up to five gallons or 50 pounds per visit. The household hazardous waste facility hours are every Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Not only is Rocklin protecting the environment but we are also meeting the challenge of state mandates for the reduction of garbage disposal in landfills without residents incurring astronomical costs. This is recycling at its best – effective reduction of waste and 100% participation.

For more information on the MRF's recycling operation, tips for the hazardous waste disposal and the Buyback Center visit the Web site at www.WPWMA.com.

Or, for more information from the City of Rocklin please contact 916.625.5560 or visit www.ci.rocklin.ca.us on the Internet.